

amongst the Testudinidae or land tortoises, to the rule that the same name
are twelve; and Mr. Gray has considered the characters as sufficiently impor-
tant to constitute a distinct genus, to which he has given the specific name
T. minutus, a name already applied by M. de Cuvier to a different Testudinidae,
to the genus Testudo as it now stands. I cannot see the propriety of separating
an individual species from a genus, to the other species of which it is in every
important respect closely allied, and assigning to it a distinct generic rank,
merely on the ground of a slight distinction in the union of the members of
a pair of scutes. This multiplication of genera, which in such extensive classes
as birds or insects may be necessary and useful, is in the present case quite
unnecessary for on the score of convenience, and necessitated by any change of
natural arrangement.

Mr. Gray suggests that "T. punctata" and "T. punctata" and consequently
T. minutus, appears to belong to this species, which is sometimes red-
dish beneath when alive. This is an unusual situation, as there is no such
name as minutus applied to a tortoise in Lacépède or in any other writer that
I am acquainted with; but Mr. Gray probably means the "Vermillion" of
that author. Had he read Lacépède's own description, he would have seen
that it agrees fully and solely with T. punctata and that the name "Vermillion"
was given to it on account of the red colour of the horny plate over the nose.
"But he cannot do so," says the author, "but on a comparison of the
colours of the two genera, I have concluded that the name of vermillion
belongs to the genus T. punctata. Out of so distant connection, one name cannot be
one name in common."

I have received many specimens of this tortoise alive from Madagascar and
from the Cape of Good Hope and have kept one for more than a year, feeding
in the summer upon lettuce and other vegetables, and hibernating in a stable
under straw.

